APEX STANDARDS
PROFESSIONAL TDOC ANALYSIS PLATFORM
CLARITY • VISION • INFLUENCE

Apex Standards TDoc Analysis Platoform started out as a tool to help IPR and patent professionals identify prior TDoc arts or relevant state of the arts back in 2017. Collectively, they are referred as Non-Patent Literature (NPL). While there are several tools on the market to analyze patent-to-patent references, patent-to-NPL relational investigation and due diligence remain labor intensive, manual, ad hoc and oftentimes bound by the personal knowledge of the researcher, making it hard to see a complete picture and make informed decisions moving forward. This tool was therefore designed to fill this gap.

Four years in, we have received a wide range of feedback from patent professionals to standardization researchers with regard to eventually making this tool easy to use for all related stakeholders. During the development process, we have taken approximately 500 suggestions from 200 domain experts and gone over 100 revisions.

It was initially designed with a purpose to solve IPR problems in mind. Today, in 2020 especially amid the Covid-19's presence around the world, we proudly offer this tool across the standardization community in hope to help people weather the shelter-in-place limitations, work more efficiently and therefore be able to stay safe and spend quality time with family.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What type of challenges does your tool solve?

A: In short, the tool serves those scenarios where TDoc data used to be understudied and underutilized because of inefficiency.

The scenarios include: inventor disclosure for patent attorneys, patent vis-à-vis standard essentiality verification for declarants and licensors/licensees, prior art searchers for litigation attorneys, as well as, apparently, meeting preparation for 3GPP delegates.

3GPP delegates are required to review newly uploaded TDcos within the week before the meeting. For example, in RAN 1, there are 3,000 TDocs on average per meeting, where 10% may be relevant to your area of expertise. This means to review 300 TDocs when the clock starts ticking, rush to the airport and get ready to engage in technical discussions when jet lagged. Under the tremoendous amount of work, stress and time pressure, this tool is designed to help delegates stay organized and be able to keep up the pace before, during and after each 3GPP meeting.

Q: If I use the tool, does that mean that I don't have to go to the 3GPP meetings anymore?

A: It likely enables remote following of meetings and easier tracking of TDocs. That said, a go/no-go decision is between you and your company.

Q: I see the dynamic filters that allow to zoom in and out different dimensions in real time. While they look handy, it strikes me and my company that such interaction can expose user interests regarded as confidential information. How do you address this and related security concerns?

A: Due to the sensitive nature of user queries or filtering criteria, we do NOT log or preserve any user activities in any form - they are discarded as soon as search results are returned back to the user's browser via the industry accepted, end-to-end encrypted SSL channel. This no-log policy is legally stipulated in the agreement that Apex Standards strictly adheres to.

Some clients asked to record their usage activities for business reporting or technical review purposes. We handle such request on a case-by-case basis.

Q: Can the tool just do TDoc for me?

A: If you refer to our comics:

www.apexstandards.com/tdoc.pro.png

you would get a feel that TDoc searching is a highly iterative process. Though a bit exaggerated, the comics illustrates almost the same journey every delegate experienced in order to mature and be able to engage a technical discussion better.

Based on the context and your technical background, you try a few keywords to begin with. Then, you observe returned results and keep refining until a satisfactory search scope has been reached. Then, you sort these TDocs by meeting, agenda, Work Item, Contributor, Spec and/or Status in order to further pick apart irrelevant from the pertinent ones.

Such iteration affects the quality of your subsequent analysis because it is based on the underlying TDocs identified. They include: historical construction (to figure out what has been done in the past or how a topic was handled in the same or other Working Groups), or, competitive technology crosschecking (when multiple methods are presented to the table, how to compare strengths and weaknesses).

Therefore, to answer your question: sorry, the tool only offers to pull out TDocs and have them organized better for you to analyze. However, it does not do TDoc or make technical decisions on your behalf. The difference is: with a tool, you would be able to do it more automatically, quickly and with peace in mind that all important aspects have been properly included along your thinking process.

> People agree to your proposal not because how good your technology is, but because how well they feel their technology has been understood.

Q: Why would I care to compare other technologies? Wouldn't it be enough to just do my job and defend my company's proposal?

A: Once upon a time we heard from a sage: the reason why people agree to your proposal is not because how good your technology is, but because how well they feel their technology has been understood. We cannot overemphasize the importance to effectively compare competing technologies especially in this consensus-based community.

Q: How important can your tool be?

A: Our primary user base includes IPR professionals and standardization researchers. Recently, we start to receive inquiries from technology licensing analysts and patent litigation attorneys. As we work closely with our users, we make sure that their core questions are answered systematically and quickly.

Generally, users come to us with specific problems to solve. We talk and suggest different ways to try the tool. We do not log user queries so we will not know their secret sauce. What we know is: they usually depart with greater confidence, certainty and joy.

We are four years old so our tool is probably not yet at the same level of importance of Matlab to engineers or Word to text editors. That said, we work around the clock towards that direction.

Q: Do you offer a free test trial?

A: Yes, we offer two weeks of free trial in general, which perfectly cover the week before and during a selected meeting.

Q: Can I pay you to up my company ranking or promote Work Items in your search results?

A: Apex Standards is a U.S.-based company. Although we are a neighbor to the headquarters of Google and Facebook in the bay area, we are NOT involved in any advertisement business and do not have an incentive to bias any search results.

> If you gain new insights fast, you feel like advancing quickly on the learning curve.

Q: Can the tool help me think out of the box?

A: Usually, you do search on things you don't know, therefore you look outside of your core expertise. With help from a tool, if you can gain new insights fast, you will feel like advancing quickly on the learning curve. Therefore, it helps, by removing the TDoc organization barrier, so you save mental bandwidth for intellectual research that will lead to invention and innovation.

Furthermore, the same goes to confirming one's understanding. With influx of new information during the standardization meeting, one crafts arguments in favor of or counter-arguments against certain technologies. Company delegates come from different positions and with different interests. If an analysis can be backed by data that is quickly summarized by a tool, it will be easier for a delegate to bring forward a convincing argument.

> It is in the core belief of Apex Standards that researchers, senior or junior, front-line delegates or back-office analysts, deserve to have a better tool.

Q: What has driven you to keep improving over the 100 revisions for the tool to date?

A: There are many masterminds, standardization researchers who have done TDoc over the decades in a similar manual process, some with support from a team while others not. For some, it may mean a career. For many, the life-long dedication, meaning and purpose of their work stretch far beyond scientific advancement itself—to the benefit of the human society—it is exactly because of their hard work that we enjoy a better, convenient life brought by those advancements today. Therefore, it is in the core belief of Apex Standards that researchers, senior or junior, front-line delegates or back-office analysts, deserve to have a better tool. ∎